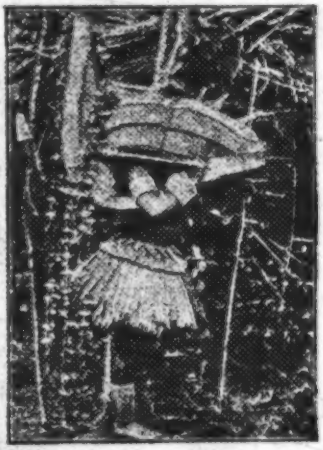
1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909) 1927 Thonga

881 A few days later, the great doctor administers to the boys a purifying medicine which they drink in a mouthful of beer. This rite seems to be rather a separation than an aggregation rite. We often find, when a marginal period comes to an end, separation rites taking place. They mean separation from the *marginal period* itself; for this also involved a kind of pollution which must be removed. Such is probably the aim of the medicine given by the Manyabe. On the other hand, this is also an aggregation rite, as the boys are allowed to drink again for the first time.



A Mayiwayiwane mask (1).

II. *The Mayiwayiwane dance.*

532 535 881 The second true aggregation rite is called the Mayiwayiwane dance. The *Mayiwayiwane* are a sort of masks which cover the whole of the upper part of the body, a kind of armour made of woven palm leaves; on the head, they are like a very high helmet protruding in front like a beak. The boys make these masks with the help of the shepherds and of the men and, in this disguise, must perform a special dance with high jumps before the women summoned on a certain day to attend. The boys must not be recognized. Should one of them let the mask fall, it would be a great misfortune, because women must not know who is dancing. 535 581 Moreover the initiated must appear before them as a kind of supernatural beings and fill them with respect and awe. Therefore they must not fall when they dance. Should one of them totter and lose his equilibrium, the shepherds cover him

(1) This mask is that worn by Pedi boys during the second circumcision school. I cannot guarantee that the Mayiwayiwane mask is of exactly the same pattern.

E. MATURE AGE

1. *The Bantu Ideal.*

581 554 562 885 The married man is called " he who has his home " (a ni le kwakwe) in opposition to the single man (nkhwenda). But let us say at once that the kind of individual called bachelor does not abound amongst the Bantus. Only the utterly wretched, invalids, and the weak-minded, are deprived of legal marriage, which for the black man is and remains the one object in life. It is through his wife and children that he becomes somebody in society. This fact does not appear during the first year of wedlock, for the newly married woman must cook at the fireplace of her mother-in-law. She is hardly more than a servant during a whole year ; she does not possess her own pot ; and this must be so because she does not yet eat the mealies of her own garden, having ploughed her fields in her former domicile the previous year. Her husband eats with her. He is not yet 595 a lord. But if he is rich, if he is the heir of an important man, he will not be long in buying a second and third wife.

These new marriages will be contracted like the first, but with less pomp. It may even happen that the feast is held in the husband's village, if he is middle-aged and is celebrating his fifth or sixth wedding.

595 342 556 592 361 For each new wife, he will build a hut. He has begun his village when building the house of his first wife, the great wife, (nsati lwe nkulu) as she is called, who will remain the principal one whatever may happen. While, without compass, he was drawing on the ground, with the marvellous instinct of the South African Native, the circumference of the circle on which the patched reed walls of his dwelling were to rise, while he was covering this circular wall with a conical roof, he was saying to himself : " I establish my home ; I inaugurate my village ". During the following years, the aim of his life will be to complete little by little another wider circle... When he has bought his

3) Pointing of the teeth (Ku hleta).

304 881 This custom is also dying out. It used to be incumbent on all the girls. Now many do not observe it. They have seen that teeth deformed in this way decay more quickly. The operation is performed on the incisors, and girls must keep their mouths closed for two or three days, not showing their teeth to anybody.

Near Rikatla, the hleta custom was still in force in the heathen villages in 1910. It gives the girls a kind of canine aspect.

4) The Milebe custom.

304 881 832 171 This is very wide-spread all over South Africa. Though it has disappeared now amongst most of the Ronga clans, it is still practised in the Manyisa country, over the whole of Bilen and in the Northern clans, amongst the Zulus, the Pedi-Suthos, etc. It is probably the origin of the famous "Hottentot apron," which some ethnographers thought to be a congenital malformation, and which is merely the result of this custom (Annotatio 5)[1]. It is a very ugly habit, very immoral from our point of view, fixing the imagination of the girl on sexual relations, but amongst the Thongas it is upheld as being quite the right thing.

B. MARRIAGE AND CONJUGAL LIFE

1) Conditions of Marriage

581 832 In the primitive Bantu tribe every girl gets married, some, however, sooner than others. Suitors prefer pretty girls to ugly ones! But what is their standard of beauty ? The ideal is tall stature, strong limbs and well developed breasts. A proverb

[1] See p. 517 in these categories or in the Analysis

says: "Nsati wa mabele u nga nabele loko u nge na bukosi." — "Do not covet a woman with large breasts if you have no money..." This does not mean that she will cost more, but her father, knowing that she will not want for suitors, will not consent to let her go unless the full lobolo is paid at once. On the other hand a girl with an elongated face is admired more than one who is too broad-faced. Of the first they say: "She is pretty, she resembles an antelope" (a kota mhala); of the second: "She is chubby-cheeked, she is like a sow." A light complexion is preferred to a very dark one, because the white or yellow races are regarded as superior, and a Native laying claim to any European or Asiatic blood is proud of it. Parents, who also have their say in the question of marriage, insist on two other points: the working capacity of the girl, and the absence of any witchcraft blot in the family. Should her mother have been convicted of being a witch, the girl will be feared. However, every girl finds a husband in the land where polygamy flourishes. If he be slow in coming, she will apply to her doctor, who will prepare the *love charms*, which will make her "appear," so that she will be noticed by the boys (See page 100). If even that does not succeed, she has other means at her disposal and may go herself to make proposals to a man (wopsana). He is seduced by her, and constitutes himself a thief who has *tlhuba*, viz. "taken in marriage by abduction" (See page 119). The parents will claim the lobolo and he must pay it. Marriage and childbearing remain the only carreer to which a Thonga woman can look forward. Hence a number of special feminine taboos which are very curious.

2) Special feminine taboos.

Some of them concern girls *before childbearing* and cease after parturition. In the Tembe and Maputju clans, girls must not eat pork, because pigs root nervously with their noses; the future child would also move its head from one side to the other, when on the verge of birth, and this would make delivery difficult. Other

Nubile girls, during their "tiwheti," must approach the *oxen kraal* and look at them. The cattle might suffer, be attacked by a bad cough (mukhulwane), get thin! This taboo is instituted to protect the oxen, not the human inhabitants of the village, as D. Kidd says is the case amongst the Zulus. (Part IV. Ch. I. E.) When women have passed the time of child-bearing, most of the taboos cease, and they can eat monkeys and porcupine if they wish!

3) The first year of married life.

I shall not return to the subject of marriage rites, which have been fully explained in the preceding chapter. Let me say that, though a Thonga woman cannot imagine life without marriage (ku kandja bukati), she does not enter on the new state with any enthusiasm. Her parents have warned her that she will be illtreated, accused of witchcraft and adultery, etc. Her sisters bewail her fate on her wedding day in song. The fact that she has been paid for, though it does not constitute an actual sale, puts her in an inferior position (See Part II).

During the first year, she has no *ndangu*, viz. no fire-place of her own. She cooks for her mother-in-law. During the three first weeks the husband eats with her and with the girl who accompanied her to her new home. Afterwards, he goes back to eat with the men. In some places it would seem that the husband eats with her the whole year, until she has her own pot (hlembeto).

4) Husband and wife.

What are the relations between husband and wife after the honey-moon? Of course they vary very much according to the character of both. As a rule however, the married people have very little intimacy with each other; the man remains with his companions on the "bandla," the village square where they meet, and only occasionally comes into the "ndangu," the reed enclosure of the fire-place, which is the true domain of the

to hinder the child from growing and to put in its place, by means of her enchantments, a snake, a hare, a quail or an antelope!

After the birth, owing to possible contamination by the lochia, sexual intercourse is prohibited till the rite of tying the cotton string (p. 56) has taken place. It is then allowed, but conception must be avoided till weaning, when relations are resumed in the normal way, and this goes on till the time when the woman is no longer able to bring forth children. I know of no special rules in connection with the menopause.

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* *

But, amongst Bantus, sexual relations are not an individual affair, as amongst nations more advanced in evolution. There is a mysterious relation between them and the collective life of the community. Hence the fact that, on certain given occasions, they are recommended, even ordered, or prohibited.

1) Cases of recommendation.

Sexual relations must take place on two principal occasions : when the inmates of a village abandon it and go elsewhere to found a new one, and when the widows perform the painful rite of "lahla khombo" (to cast away misfortune). We shall see, when studying these customs, that sexual relations have here a twofold signification : 1) they "consolidate" the little community in its new abode, viz. they strengthen its structure by confirming the authority of its chief ; 2) they provide the principal means of getting rid of all contamination, especially of the defilement connected with death. (Annotatio 13.)[1]

2) Cases of prohibition.

Married people are not considered as being in a state of defilement, as mourners are, for example. Yet this class of persons, called "ba-ku-khila," constitute a danger for those members of the community who are in a weak state of health. They must not come in contact with the circumcised, because in that case their wounds would not heal properly.

1 [See pp. 518-519 in these categories or in V6--Analyst]

834 They must not enter the hut of a person dangerously ill ; this would
784 hasten his death. People who are just recovering from a disease, when
581 they walk about on the paths, must tie around their ankles the root
829 called sungi, which will protect them against the perspiration or
753 emanation left by married people in their footprints, because, as one of my informants said, "ba-ku-khila ba hisa," viz. married people are hot.

834 Moreover not only individuals but the whole social life would be
836 endangered if sexual relations took place when the community itself is
581 in a critical position. They are prohibited therefore in wartime, during the whole duration of hunting parties, and also during the marginal
829 periods. Strange to say, this law does not apply so severely to unmarried boys and girls amusing themselves according to the "shigango" custom (p. 97). It seems that it is not the act in itself which is tabooed, but the act in as much as it is accomplished by regularly married people ; in this case only has it a bearing on the life of the community.

What is the reason of these prohibitions ? "Married people are hot." What does this aphorism mean ? The following rite may help us to understand it.

831 In the Maluleke country, when the whole population enters a lake
834 to kill fish according to the tjeba custom (Part IV. Chap. I), a little boy
226 and a little girl are chosen and laid down under a lion's skin, as if they were husband and wife, and told to remain very quiet during all the time
829 the grown up people are fishing. Not knowing anything about sexual
789 intercourse, they will obey ; then the fish also will keep quiet and
771 will be killed easily. Why ? Because there is in the sexual act something wild, fierce, passionate which, according to the law of correspondance which is at the base of all Bantu magic, has an influence on the hostile forces : these will be excited and more difficult to overcome : enemies in battle, the animals of the bush during hunting and fishing parties, disease, danger of contamination at death and during the marginal periods. Life is, so to speak accelerated by the sexual act, and this acceleration is communicated to the whole of Nature. Therefore : Keep quiet, be continent!

This profound conception of life also explains why so often certain actions must be accomplished by children, not yet able to have sexual relations, or by old women who no longer practise them.

Let us remark that all these rites do not belong to Animism, properly speaking, but to Dynamism (Part VI. Chap. I), which plays a part almost as important as Animism in Bantu primitive philosophy.

777 784 from you... In the same manner, do not prepare the skin for the child before it is born. Your wife would not bring forth a human being. Should you transgress this rule, you would bring misfortune on yourself (wa tihlolela, wa singita), and on your family. If you go to Moneri (the missionary) and ask him for a skin for this purpose before the birth of your child, he will tell you it is so." Note the deep-rooted conviction of the old heathen, who appeals to the authority of the missionary to strengthen the taboo!

585 784 777 262 10. Later on, when you are married, you must avoid eating honey with your wife for a whole year, till she has had a child. The bride is allowed to eat honey at her parent's home, but not in her new domicile and with her husband. The husband can eat it in the bush, but he must wash his hands when he comes back, lest his wife should notice it. She would run home if she knew of it. We have already met with this prohibition in the tjekela visit, and heard the reason for it : honey flows ; the bride would go! The explanation now given is this : honey is too sweet, and your bride is too sweet also. (Is it not your honey-moon or honey-year ?) The two things do not go together. (Psa yalana, they hate each other.) A third reason is this : Bees, when they have eaten their honey, fly away from the hive. So would your wife do... After a year this misfortune is no longer to be feared.

606 581 This last idea is very curious. It shows that the bukoñwana taboos *decrease in severity as time passes.* The strained relations between the son-in-law and his wife's mother also become easier. He begins to call her mamana, and she calls him ñwana. This transformation even goes so far that in some cases a mukoñwana can go and dwell in his parents-in-law's village, especially if he has children and if the children are grown up. And this fact gives us the natural explanation of these curious rules.

Marriage, as we have seen, is not an individual affair in the collective stage of family life. It is a contract made between two groups, which enter by it into a special relation towards each other. This relation is fraught with danger, because the interests of both groups are involved ; a bride and bridegroom are inspired with a mutual feeling of fear, knowing that an

1: Junod M-5 (1895-1909)1927 Thonga

606 587 eventual misunderstanding between them will have its "contre coup" throughout the two groups. The two families regard each other with mistrust, especially the two married couples who depend so closely upon each other, owing to the lobola ; but when they have become acquainted, when they are assured that common life is possible and even agreeable, when the first alliance has been strengthened by others amongst the tinamu, then the bukoñwana taboos more or less *fall off*. This is an explanation of these strange relations between relatives-in-law ; I do not pretend that it is absolutely adequate. There may also be in this domain some remains of previous customs which have now disappeared, and Comparative Ethnography will probably throw more light on this problem in the course of time.

C. MARRIAGE RULES

582 The study of the terms of relationship has shown us the constitution of the Thonga family. We have seen that they are often dictated by the possibility or non-possibility for a man of marrying certain women. There exist distinct marriage rules, and I propose to recapitulate them here, at the risk of some repetition, in order to throw as much light as possible on this difficult but very important subject.

Generally speaking it may be said that the Thongas are *endogamic* as regards the tribe and the clan, and *exogamic* as regards the family. They are *endogamic* as regards the tribe, that is to say 582 178 they marry within it. Members of clans very remote from each other may find it difficult to contract unions, (see later on), but they do so, especially in Spelonken, where representatives of many different parts of the tribe have met by force of historical circumstances. In the neighbourhood of Lourenço Marques you may find Thonga women married to men of other tribes and even to white people. But this is the result of a new state of things, which the old Thongas did not foresee ; nor would they have approved of it, I am sure. In Shiluvane, I was in a very favourable

263 small amount of salt it contains! This is a long process attended
317 with very unsatisfactorily results. During the Anglo-Boer war,
258 Natives round Leydsdorp reverted to it as all the stores were closed and no salt was procurable.

Salt manufacture, Northern Transvaal. *Phot. P. Rosset.*

Nowadays Native manufacture of salt has entirely ceased. The beautiful glistening white article has advantageously replaced the greyish, blackish mixture of former times.

II. *Food.*

252 It is not an exaggeration to speak of a culinary art amongst
581 the Thongas. They give great attention to cooking. Of a woman who knows how to cook well, it is said: "Awa hisa" "she burns;" not that she lets the sauce burn, but this expression corresponds to the French "cordon bleu." A girl who "hisa" will have more chance of being "lobola" than another.

252 This importance given to cooking explains the great richness of
192 the culinary vocabulary. Every variety of dish or of culinary process has its particular name, and to master all these terms